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The University of Montana

NEWS RELEASE

University Communications
Missoula, MT 59812
(406) 243-2522

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Sept. 26, 1995

UM LANDS FEDERAL GRANT TO EXTEND KUFM BROADCAST SIGNAL

MISSOULA --

A \$494,000 grant to The University of Montana - Missoula from the U.S. Department of Commerce will add more than 100,000 Montanans to KUFM-radio's potential listening audience and improve service to some areas of the state already receiving the station's programming.

The grant goes to KUFM's Signal Extension Project for buying telecommunications equipment to upgrade the station's origination facilities in the UM Performing Arts and Radio-TV Center. The improved facilities will provide new service to Dillon and better service to Butte, Hamilton, Helena and Kalispell.

With the new equipment KUFM's current microwave delivery system will be expanded to include a satellite delivery system, which is better suited to Montana's mountainous terrain. The station's digital signal will be uplinked to a satellite, then downlinked to receivers and transmitted to the extended service area.

"The Signal Extension Project has long been a dream of both the station and fans of public radio," Madelaine Thompson, the station's assistant director of development, said. "For many years KUFM has received letters from Montanans in areas receiving a marginal to no signal at all requesting that KUFM extend or improve the signal to their communities."

The federal grant, awarded under the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Public Telecommunications Facilities Program, will provide 75 percent of the

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total cost of the project. KUFM staff will need to raise another \$175,000 in gifts and grants from individuals, businesses, foundations and other granting agencies.

Established in 1962, the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program has awarded about \$500 million to improve public telecommunications services, helping extend public radio to nearly 90 percent of the U.S. population.

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KUFM/tb
Specialized Western, Dillon, Butte, Hamilton, Helena and Kalispell
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